Review: Two Juvenile Cantatas

Source: *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 30, No. 560 (Oct. 1, 1889), p. 616

Published by: [Musical Times Publications Ltd.](#)

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3359929>

Accessed: 11-02-2016 02:28 UTC

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Musical Times Publications Ltd. is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Lost Dimplechin and Shakespeare's Merrie Meeting. Two Juvenile Cantatas. Written and Arranged by R. Ganthony, with music by Thomas Murby.

[Thomas Murby.]

THE art of providing healthful and pleasing educational exercises in music, whether vocal or instrumental, is more thoroughly studied in the present day than it was some twenty years back. The experience gained by the tentative efforts of times past is exhibited in every earnest effort in the direction of the education of children. In the two Cantatas for juvenile voices by Mr. Thomas Murby—namely, “Lost Dimplechin” and “Shakespeare's Merrie Meeting”—now under notice, the plan of each is carefully calculated to leave good impressions upon the minds of the little actors. The first contains parts for a chorus and some ten characters, and there are sixteen charming little pieces, such as children can easily pick up and sing with heartiness, with a “real” overture to begin with. In the second, the words of the songs are drawn chiefly from the immortal bard's own writings, and the action includes nearly all the *Pyramus* and *Thisbe* scene from “A Midsummer Night's Dream.” The characters in the Cantata are *Shakespeare* himself, *Hamlet*, *Ophelia*, *Katharine*, *Petruchio*, *Macbeth*, *Lady Macbeth*, *King Henry V.*, *Katherine of France*, *Pyramus*, *Thisbe*, *Wall*, *Moonshine*, *Lion*, *the Witches*, &c. The music consists of an Overture, three Choruses, “Hail, Shakespeare, hail,” “Invocation to Shakespeare,” and “See, where sadly”; a song with chorus, “Tell me where is fancy bred”; a Chorus for Witches, “Mingle, mingle”; two more Choruses, “Come high, come low,” and “Hark, hark, the watch-dog's bark”; a graceful Minuet, and two more Choruses, “Over hill, over dale,” and “Our revels now are ended.” It is obvious, therefore, that some knowledge of the works of our national poet must be obtained by the young “eyasses” who take part in the Cantata. Both works are excellent in their way, and the pretty music with which they are provided is just the sort of thing to attract and to procure much delight.

Ezekiel. A Dramatic Oratorio. Composed by R. Machill Garth. [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE compiler of the libretto of this dramatic Oratorio, the Rev. C. R. Linton, has divided the work into three parts. The first contains three sections, called severally “The Vision,” “The Commission,” and the “Roll of Woe”; the second has also three, entitled “The Prophecy of Captivity,” “The Sign of Desolation,” and “The Remnant and the Restoration”; the third has two only, “The Resurrection” and “The Kingdom of Christ.” Considering that the subject does not necessarily fall into dramatic phases, the ingenuity of this arrangement will commend itself to the minds of those who might be at a loss to understand how the subject could be made to justify the title given to it. The whole of the words have been selected from the Old Testament, with one exception at the conclusion, where a short passage from St. John has been added. The composer has written no overture, and has set out his work for solos, duets, trios, quartets, and choruses of the simplest style of writing. He has occasionally employed passages of imitation in his choruses, and has sufficiently indicated his knowledge of the devices of fugue and counterpoint here and there in the course of the work. There are numbers of solos for all voices, some of which disclose melodic desire, if not complete realisation. These will give work to a number of performers when the oratorio is done in the church or the concert-room. There are forty-two numbers in the Oratorio, the *Finale* having some eight-part writing, so that, performed in its entirety, it would occupy some time. It is quite possible that it would please if given in instalments—that is to say, if its “dramatic” character would not be likely to suffer by such a treatment.

Sonata, No. 2. E dur. Für pianoforte und Violine. Von Algernon Ashton (Op. 38). [Berlin: N. Simrock.]

It is said that none but the most enthusiastic musicians in the present day devote their talents to such complicated and learned labours as are necessary to the production of Sonatas and the higher forms of musical art. The vast number of songs and lighter pieces which are daily poured from the press often only disclose the temerity of the

writers and the crudity of their thoughts. There are, of course, many well-designed and musicianlike productions in the form of songs and so forth intended for public acceptance, but good honest and well thought out works, set down with knowledge, are not so frequent as they ought to be considering the boasted state of music in this country. The answer is that they are not produced because they are not profitable. The artist who works for the advancement of his art, therefore, not only demands, but should command, attention for his labours. In this spirit hearty commendation should be offered to Mr. Ashton for his admirably written Sonata in E major, the outcome of evident enthusiasm for art. It is an effort of high aim, and admirably planned, even though in the first movement the composer has thought proper to modify the forms employed by the older writers. Still, in its way, that movement is shapely, and while like all the movements it demands considerable skill on the part of both executants, the effect that can be produced is to a large extent a reward for study. The first movement is in the nominal key E major; the *Larghetto*, a beautiful movement in modern style, is in D flat major. The *Finale* returns to the original key, and although the whole is well written, this last portion is more spontaneous in character, and contains work which will please both players and hearers. Soloists desiring to add to their list of effective concert-pieces will do well to make an early acquaintance with Mr. Ashton's Sonata.

Compositions by Anatole Liadoff. (Pianoforte Albums, Nos. 41, 42, 43.) [Novello, Ewer and Co.]

THE composer of these pieces—a contemporary Russian musician—exhibits a distinct preference for that mode of national expression of which the initial examples were seen in the works of Chopin. He finds in the rhythms, common perhaps among the Russian people, that power and variety which is altogether lacking in the well-used forms of more Southern European people. There is, in the several pieces in the three books, a sort of Asiatic character implied in the changes of key and unexpected modulations, especially in those called “Biroulki,” of which there are fourteen. The arbitrary demands of the accepted notation compel the composer to express his melodies in a manner which doubtless more or less imperfectly represents his ideas and actual intentions. It is quite possible that if these airs were performed upon instruments which permit of occasional lesser divisions of the octave than those which can only be found in tones and semitones, the true national effect would be obtained. Regarding them, however, as they stand, the hearer cannot fail to be impressed by their vigorous originality. The musicianship of the composer is patent in all. In the Preludes, the Mazurkas, the Intermezzi, the Valses, the Arabesques, and other pieces of familiar form may be found many beautiful ideas cleverly expressed. In addition to their melodic charms, the singularity of the rhythm of many of the pieces makes them most valuable as studies, and as such they will be found of the greatest utility. That the composer can also work ably with other than local forms and characteristic qualities, is shown by an ably written fugue, wherein the theme is treated in a fashion which betokens careful training and considerable tact in dealing with classical models. Musicians will not only be glad to make acquaintance with these specimens of Anatole Liadoff's genius, but will look with interest for others which may follow.

Miniature Suite for Small Hands. By John Kinross. Op. 18. [Curwen and Sons.]

THE Composer of this admirable Suite has taken as a pattern the form of the suite common during the first half of the eighteenth century. The several movements consist of an Allemande, a Gavotte with a Musette, two Bourrées, a Sarabande, a Minuet, and a Gigue. Further than the adoption of the titles there is no other indebtedness. The melodies are original and gracefully written, and the harmonies, nearly all in two parts, are most cleverly set out. The simplicity of the several movements is only equalled by their attractive character. They would make excellent teaching pieces, as much for the interest they would excite in the young player as for the inducement they offer to the study of other works of like nature.